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FACTS ABOUT BRIAR PATCH FARMS

EATONTON, GEORGIA

Official Name: Briar Patch Farms.

Location: In Putnam County, central Georgia, 7 miles from Eatonton. This county is the home of Joel Chandler Harris, author of the "Uncle Remus" tales about Bre'r Rabbit and the Briar Patch. Hence the project name. Project Headquarters: Eatonton, Georgia.

History of Project: Initiated by F.E.R.A. in 1934, Briar Patch Farms was transferred to the Resettlement Administration about November 1, 1935. Preliminary approval was received December 23, 1935, final approval, July 9, 1936.

Purpose of Project: This agricultural community project is designed to relocate on productive land selected tenant families, rehabilitation families, and young married couples just entering the field of agriculture. These families are expected to become self-supporting, and to achieve a higher standard of living than has been possible for them.

Project Description: The 7,591 acres of Briar Patch Farms were formerly plantation land which had been completely abandoned as the result of deprecations made by the boll weevil and poor farming methods. The land which is rapidly being improved by terracing, planting legumes, and the shifting from cotton-growing to dairying is now very productive. Approximately 1,200 acres have been cleared, the rest being used for pasture, or held for future development. Individual farmsteads average approximately 110 acres each. Major income is derived from the production of cotton and hogs, but more farmers are gradually turning to dairying. Of the 22 farms, 5 are primarily dairy farms. Milk from these farms is sold to the Eatonton Co-operative Creamery. Crops include cotton, wheat, oats, corn and hay. Hogs, cattle, mules and chickens comprise the livestock. Co-operative facilities will include a purchasing and marketing association, a sweet potato curing house, and co-operative ownership of farm equipment and buildings. Community facilities include a school, an administration building, and a combined cannery-vocational training building. The cannery produces only for the homesteaders at present, but is also adapted for canning produce for market.

House Description: Of the 22 houses on the project, 16 are new one-story frame houses and 6 have been repaired. Outbuildings include barns, stables, poultry houses, smoke houses, and pig pens; also dairy barns and milk houses on the five dairy farms. Fencing, landscaping and erosion control have been provided. Individual wells with pump houses and hand pumps will supply water. Existing wells are being repaired. Individual sanitary privies dispose of sewage. No provision is made for electricity. Approximately 4 miles of project roads have been constructed. Several other county and state roads traverse or border the tract.

The Homesteaders: A study of family and social data is pending.

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